GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6189
ANSWERED ON:05.05.2003
PRODUCTION OF MAIZE
RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 16 lakh tonne maize is produced every year in Bihar;

(b) if so, whether the farmers have sown maize seed namely `Kargil` developed by Montesso Multinational Company; and

(c) if so, the action the Government propose to take to provide compensation to farmers and penalise the seed company after conducting an inquiry into it?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a): On an average, 15.43 lakh tonnes of maize {three years` average (1999-2000 to 2001-02)} is being produced every year in Bihar.

(b): As per information received from Department of Agriculture, Government of Bihar and M/sMonsanto India Limited, as such, no quantity of maize seed in the brand name of `Kargil` has been sold by M/s Monsanto India Limited in Bihar during the year 2002-03. As per information received from Monsanto Company, the Kargil Seeds India Limited was acquired by Monsanto Technologies India Limited, renamed as Monsanto India Limited, on 1st April 1999 and the `Kargil 900 M` seed of maizewas sold upto the year 2001. After that, the brand name was changed as `ASGROW 900 M` and finally in May, 2002 the brand name was again changed to `Super 900 M`.

(c): A Team of Experts to assess the reasons for failure of maize crop due to non-filling of grains in the cob of maize crops in Bihar has already been constituted by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and a Committee was constituted by ICAR inthe matter. Finally, the Committee, after investigating the matter in details, has concluded that the poor grain setting and failure of maize crop is attributed to unfavourable weather conditions which have impacted other crops also in the region (Bihar) like pigeon pea and mustard. Grain set in crop planted during last week of September to 1st Week of November were adversely affected by unusual temperature variations and cold stress in the areas where the flowering coincided with prolonged extreme cold waves irrespective of varieties/hybrids. Degree of seed set varied from hybrid to hybrid depending upon the flowering time and its coincidence with cold wave period.

In the context of above findings, the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry ofAgriculture, is of the view that there was nothing wrong with the quality of seed of the particular hybrid, viz; `Super 900 M` sold by M/s Monsanto India Limited in the State of Bihar. Accordingly, the Department neither proposes to penalize the Seed Company nor provide any compensation to the farmers.